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25X1

OCI No. 2357/73
6 November 1973

MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT: The Effect of the Israeli Departure on Black Africa

The 26 black African countries that have broken relations with Tel Aviv since Uganda's trend-setting move in March 1972 lost little by their action. In many of those countries, Israeli aid was minimal and was no match for the attractive promises of assistance that have been coming from the Arab world, particularly Libya and Saudi Arabia. Such promises coincided with growing African disenchantment over Israel's refusal to return the occupied territories--helped along by constant Arab diplomatic efforts--and with increasing Arab support on issues of major interest to the Africans, such as the termination of white minority rule in southern Africa.

Over the years, Tel Aviv's assistance to sub-Saharan African has been modest in financial terms, averaging about \$5 million a year to support a wide range of military, agricultural, medical, youth, and labor programs. In some countries, such as Nigeria and Zaire, private Israeli commercial firms, most notably in the construction sector, set up operations. These do not appear to have been affected by recent events. (See Annex).

In the sixties when most of the African states were just getting started as independent entities, Israeli assistance, particularly in the fields of security training and construction, did make an important contribution to their development. Moreover, the continent's new leaders welcomed aid from Israel, a country they saw as an example for their own nation-building ambitions and considered free of a colonial past and imperialist motives.

By 1970, however, many black African countries were finding it increasingly difficult to justify their ties with Tel Aviv in light of the growth of pro-Arab sentiment in the United Nations and Organization of African Unity. Uganda's break in 1972 was a signal to other African leaders to reconsider their own relations with Tel Aviv in the context of

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possible Arab political and economic assistance. In some countries, the presence of a predominant or at least large Muslim population was also a factor. Such considerations simply outweighed the value of Israeli aid.

Among those countries that have severed ties with Tel Aviv, Uganda, Zaire, and Ethiopia probably received the most attention from Israel over the years. Uganda had one of the largest Israeli military missions in Africa. Israeli construction firms were heavily engaged in the construction of airfields, barracks, and apartment buildings. The Israelis gave General Amin virtually unlimited credit for the purchase of arms and equipment.

In Zaire, Israeli assistance was instrumental in training the army in the immediate post-independence period. Before seizing power, President Mobutu himself had received paratroop training in Israel and afterward used the Israelis to train an elite paracommando battalion that forms the nucleus of his military power base. Over the years, however, Israeli assistance declined steadily; at the time of Zaire's break it was being phased out entirely following Mobutu's decision in May 1973 not to renew the military assistance agreement.

At the present time only Ethiopia is likely to feel enough of a pinch from the Israeli departure to prompt a search for an alternative source for aid that had been supplied by Israel. Israeli technical assistance to Ethiopia and commercial relations between the two countries were modest and relatively unimportant in the overall relationship. Since the mid-1960s, however, the Ethiopians have relied heavily upon Tel Aviv for assistance in combating the insurgency in Eritrea Province carried on by the Muslim-dominated Eritrean Liberation Front (ELF). Israeli advisers helped train the paramilitary police that operate in Eritrea

Earlier this year Tel Aviv began reducing its military advisory effort, particularly in Eritrea, and it seemed reluctant to meet Ethiopian requests for additional military assistance. Nevertheless, Israel remained a major supplier

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of equipment for Ethiopia's security forces, and at the time of the break, Tel Aviv was Ethiopia's most important military benefactor after the US. Moreover, the Emperor and other high-level officials continued to value Israeli assistance and were probably disappointed by Tel Aviv's moves even though some Ethiopian officials questioned the advisability of seeking additional Israeli aid in light of Arab pressure on Ethiopia to break with Israel.

The Ethiopian Foreign Minister, in comments to the US Ambassador following Ethiopia's break, implied that the move could have been avoided if the US had increased its military aid. Should the Emperor now see good prospects for an accommodation with the Arabs as result of his break with Israel he may decide that he will not have to press the US further. The Emperor has already received clear signals from Washington that US military assistance will not be increased, and he may now be looking for other military suppliers.

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At the moment, Haile Selassie may be more concerned about the possibility of negative domestic reactions to the break with Israel. Some Ethiopian military officers, sensitive to Arab support for Ethiopia's enemies, reportedly welcomed the break, but other high level officers who valued Israeli assistance are disappointed. The break with Israel has apparently surprised and confused the many Ethiopians who are aware of ties between the two countries dating from biblical times. Moreover, the bond between Ethiopia's Christian ruling elite and the Israelis based on their common fear of Muslim encirclement surely remains intact. In an effort to forestall criticism of the break, the Addis Ababa government has launched an extensive press campaign featuring congratulatory messages to the Emperor from Arab leaders.

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ANNEX

African Countries That Have Broken
Diplomatic Relations with Israel

<u>Country</u>	<u>Date of Break</u>	<u>Type of Israeli Aid</u>
Uganda	March 1972	Military and security advisers, scholarships, active commercial firms
Chad	28 November 1972	Small youth program, a few paratroopers being trained in Zaire
Congo	31 December 1972	Small contingent of medical and agricultural technicians
Niger	4 January 1973	Small youth program
Mali	5 January 1973	Vocational program, scholarships
Burundi	16 May 1973	A few paratroopers being trained in Zaire
Togo	21 September 1973	Youth program, scholarships
Zaire	4 October 1973	Paratroop training, commercial firms

(Outbreak of Middle East War)

Rwanda	8 October 1973	Small youth program
Dahomey	9 October 1973	Small youth program
Upper Volta	11 October 1973	Unknown; perhaps a few scholarships

A - 1

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Equatorial Guinea	12 October 1973	Unknown
Cameroon	13 October 1973	Youth program, civic action projects
Tanzania	19 October 1973	Some commercial trainees
Malagasy Republic	20 October 1973	Unknown, perhaps some scholarships, a few agronomists
Central African Republic	20 October 1973	Unknown; perhaps some scholarships
Ethiopia	23 October 1973	Active in military and security advisory role, medical and agricultural technicians
Nigeria	25 October 1973	A few scholarships, active commercial firms
Gambia	25 October 1973	Unknown
Zambia	26 October 1973	Active youth and agricultural training programs, scholarships
Sierra Leone	27 October 1973	A few technicians; scholarships
Ghana	28 October 1973	Training for 2 military officers
Senegal	28 October 1973	Unknown
Gabon	29 October 1973	Small youth program
Kenya	1 November 1973	Medical and agricultural technicians
Liberia	2 November 1973	Small youth program

A - 2

25X1

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